Workforce Development Council

Executive Committee 11/9/09

NOTES

- 1) IECE Programs Hospitality and Green Construction Doug Webster provided an update on the Hospitality and Green Construction IECEs. Copys of his reports were handed out. The projects are progressing well. He also introduces the concept of a Creative Technology IECE as a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math)initiative. The goal would be to strengthen the State's STEM career education and training programs, provide Vermonters with an incentive to pursue STEM careers and to support sustainable economic and socially responsible commerce within manufacturing and engineering related industries. It was agreed to discuss this and consider it further after the first of the year.
- 2) Education/Economic Development Initiative Update and Next steps Chip and John reported that the first meeting was successful and the group agreed to meet again. Chip has arranged a meeting for December 11. A summary of the comments at the first meeting is attached.
- 3) Report on ARRA grant applications in Healthcare and Energy Sectors Chip reported that two applications for ARRA funds have been submitted to US DOL since September, one in healthcare and one for green jobs. Both followed similar approaches in that they include numerous specific training projects designed to target specific training needs and gaps that were identified by employers. Project summaries were included in the meeting folder. We do not expect to hear the results of these applications until January 2010 at the earliest.
- 4) 2011 Budget Chip reported that the budget for the WIBs is expected to remain at 2010 levels for 2011. Its anyone's guess what will happen with WIA funds, although the current high unemployment rates will create a demand for an increase in these funds. The WDC is currently implementing a grant from DOL for sectoral development that has another 15 months to run and Chip has applied for another similar grant that would allow us to expand the work in the area of green jobs, broadly defined through 2012.
- 5) Adult Education and Economic Growth Act House draft of new WIA. This is the first information about the WIA Re-Authorization, and addresses Title II, Adult Education and Literacy. Chip provided a summary in the meeting packet.

It reflects an effort by some in the new administration to shift the focus of these Federal funds more toward workforce preparation, which is supported in Vermont by many leaders of those programs. It also suggests placing more emphasis on English as a Second Language Programs. This is a direction Vermont should watch closely because with a low census of non-English speakers, it could adversely effect our funding.

Education and Economic Development

12/11/09

Summary Meeting Notes

Purpose:

Our role is to build a strong connection between education and economic development policy, and to assist in the development of polices that benefit individuals and the State's economy.

Problem Statement:

- 1) There are concerns about the effectiveness of the education system at preparing people for citizenship and employment.
- 2) The system is well resourced, but there is a debate about the distribution of these resources and about affordability.
- 3) Important components of the education system are not adequately linked too many disconnects.
- 4) A skilled workforce can be our best economic development asset, yet we lack an integrated and broadly supported plan to link our educational investments to our economic development policies.

Evidence:

- High school and college non-completion rates
- Lack of awareness among students of career opportunities in Vt.
- Problematic access to secondary technical education programs
- Cost barriers to higher education
- Low enrollments in STEM programs
- Rigid institutional structures and limited access to alternatives.

- Tendency to overlay solutions without long term systemic impact
- Inadequate capacity of adult illiteracy/basic skills programs
- Inadequate capacity to prepare workers for a changing economy
- Employers report difficulty filing many positions

Priority Areas:

To be explored and discussed on Dec 11:

- Student career awareness
- Pre K 12 Transformation
- Postsecondary education access
- Continuing ed / Adult ed / Retraining
- Mapping of Career pathways
- On-demand training support for employers
- Integrated work-based learning

Vermont Workforce development Council 12/10/09